Critical assessment of mechanisms used to measure police performance: A South African perspective

8 February 2017

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Head of the Crime & Justice Programme
OVERVIEW

• Introduction
• Why both performance and conduct measures are necessary?
• Can crime statistics a measure of police impact?
• Reflections on SAPS output indicators
• Reflecting on indicators of police conduct
• Conclusions and recommendations
The ISS is an African nonprofit organisation that enhances human security through research, policy advice and capacity building.

Vision for Africa to achieve its potential as a peaceful and prosperous continent for all its people.

Africa in 2016

Crisis hotspots
- Angola: Growing political instability
- Burundi: Instability due to political violence
- Cameroon, Chad, Nigeria & Niger: Islamist insurgency
- CAR: First elections after civil war & transition period
- DRC: Potential term-limit extension & contentious election
- Egypt: Developing insurgency
- Libya: Civil war
- Mali: Islamist insurgency
- Niger: Attempted coup
- Somalia: Ongoing civil war
- South Sudan: Civil war
- Sudan: War in Darfur
In a democracy the police face a “double demand” from the public.

1. the public expect that the police will enforce the law and reduce incidents of crime
2. the police will treat the people that they come into contact with professionally and fairly.

Police legitimacy is therefore dependent on both what the police do and how they do it.

"Modest but consistent scientific evidence supports the hypothesis that the less respectful police are towards suspects and citizens generally, the less people will comply with the law.

Changing police "style" may thus be as important as focusing police "substance." Making both the style and substance of police practices more "legitimate" in the eyes of the public, particularly high-risk juveniles, may be one of the most effective long-term police strategies for crime prevention."

Section 205 of the Constitution:
The Police exist to prevent, combat, and investigate crime, to maintain public order, to protect and secure the inhabitants of the Republic and their property, and to uphold and enforce the law.

Government Priority:
“to ensure that all people in South Africa are and feel safe.”

Reduce Crime

Outcomes

Improve public trust

Outputs

Actionably crime intelligence, targeted patrols, focused operations, timeous investigations, legal arrests, public order management, procedural fairness, professional conduct, etc
Acting National Commissioner Lt-General Phalane highlights that the Back to Basics approach requires both implementation of “key policing practices” and that “we uphold a high standard of conduct.”

*SAPS Annual Performance Plan 2016/17*

- SAPS Strategic Plans
- SAPS Annual Plans
- SAPS Annual Reports
- SAPS Station Performance Charts
- SAPS Personnel Enhancement Process (PEP)
The SAPS Strategic Plan for 2014 to 2019 requires:

- 2% reduction of ‘serious’ crimes per annum
- 2% reduction of ‘contact’ crimes per annum
- 2% reduction in the levels of crime against women, children and other vulnerable groups per annum

That is a 10% reduction over the five year strategic period

Between 2014/15 and 2015/16:

- ‘Serious’ crimes had decreased by 1%
- ‘Contact’ crimes had increased by 1%
- Rape had decreased by 3.9%
- Sexual Assault had increased by 2.1%
VOC SURVEY REPORTING TRENDS 2011 – 2014/15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2013/14</th>
<th>2014/15</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theft of personal property</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>34.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Car hijacking</td>
<td>79.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>85.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>38.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assault</td>
<td>49.8</td>
<td>45.6</td>
<td>55.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sexual offence</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>73.7</td>
<td>63.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer fraud</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>26.8</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
LOCAL VARIATION ON CRIME REPORTING

Western Cape Community Surveys

Victims report crime most or all of the time %

- Cape Town
- Bellville
- Kraaifontein
- Kuilsriver
- Kleinvlei
- Phillipi
- Mfuleni
- Harare
- Khayelitsha
- Manenberg
- Gugulethu

Difficult or very difficult to access police %

- Kleinvlei
- Kuilsriver
- Cape Town
- Bellville
- Manenberg
- Mfuleni
- Kraaifontein
- Gugulethu
- Phillipi
- Harare
- Khayelitsha
SOUTH AFRICAN CRIME TRENDS 1994 TO 2016

[Graph showing crime trends from 1994/95 to 2015/16 for violent interpersonal crime, robbery, property crime, and other crime.]
WHY CRIME STATISTICS SHOULD GENERALLY NOT BE A MEASURE OF POLICE PERFORMANCE

• Crime is a complex social phenomenon and there is little that the police can do about the root causes.
• Using crime statistics promotes the idea that only the police can address the overall crime challenge
• Rather, the crime statistics should be seen as a measure of challenge facing society and government as a whole
• Reporting rates vary across categories, precincts and time for various reasons
• Focusing on crime statistics can lead to manipulation of data reducing the value of the data for addressing this problem
• “You can have the figures going down, but the crime levels are still very high. So there’s a distinction between the statistics and the reality on the ground. So this time they are fighting the figures, not the reality.” SAPS Testimony before the Khayelitsha Commission of Inquiry

Nevertheless certain crime statistics are a good measure of police performance!
MURDER & ROBBERIES TRENDS

Since 2011/12

Murder Rate
Increased by 10%
(3,119 more cases)

Robberies increased by 31.5%
(31,758 more cases)

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THE CONTEXT OF HOMICIDE

SAPS Docket Analysis 2007/8

- Social behaviour: 65%
- Criminal: 16%
- Group behaviour: 7%
- Other: 12%
INCIDENTS OF MURDER

Murder - 2015/2016
Incidents per Precinct

Murder Incidents per precinct
- 0 - 5
- 6 - 15
- 16 - 20
- 21 - 30
- 31 - 45
- 46 - 55
- 56 - 70
- 71 - 110
- 111 - 180
- 181 - 280

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Source: SAPS 2016
Map produced on 26 October 2016
RISK OF MURDER

Murder - 2015/2016
Per Capita Incidents

Murder
Per Capita Incidents (100k)
0.000 - 5.000
5.001 - 15.000
15.01 - 25.00
25.01 - 35.00
35.01 - 45.00
45.01 - 60.00
60.01 - 85.00
85.01 - 132.0
132.1 - 236.0
235.1 - 546.4

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Source: SAPS 2016
Map produced on 26 October 2016

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## SAPS Annual Performance Plans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>2015/16</th>
<th>2016/17</th>
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<td>Strategic Priorities</td>
<td>Performance Indicators</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
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<td>37 (9 new)</td>
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<tr>
<td>VIS POL</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>23 (1 new)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Detectives</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>28 (5 new)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crime Intelligence</td>
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<td>10 (4 new)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Protection &amp; Security</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>34</strong></td>
<td><strong>98 (19 new)</strong></td>
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</table>
SAPS ARRESTS & NPA CASE FINALISATIONS TRENDS

SAPS Arrests

NPA Finalisations
WHEN STATISTICS ARE NOT ENOUGH

**Prevention & Combatting of Corruption Act - Performance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>PRECCA Cases</th>
<th>PRECCA Arrests</th>
<th>PRECCA Convictions</th>
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<tr>
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<td>70</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>86</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015/2016</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>21</td>
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</table>

**Prevention of Organised Crime Act - Performance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>POCA Cases</th>
<th>POCA Arrests</th>
<th>POCA Conviction</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>2015/2016</td>
<td>13</td>
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</table>
POLICE CONDUCT: PUBLIC SATISFACTION

Percentage of households satisfaction with police decreased overtime

- 2011: 64.7%
- 2012: 63.1%
- 2013/14: 59.9%
- 2014/15: 57.0%

The biggest decrease in satisfaction with police was found in the North West, Northern Cape and Western Cape.
Civil Claims Paid Out in R Millions

175% Increase in five years
The SAPS disciplinary system is crucial for promoting and maintaining professional conduct. A review of the system is necessary to rectify shortcomings & improve effectiveness. Only 97 hearings related to the SAPS Code of Conduct.
CONCLUSIONS

The SAPS has a sophisticated performance measurement system by world standards. However, there is room for improving and refining the measures used as partly suggested below:

• The objective of Police performance measurement should be to improve effectiveness and conduct.

• Performance measurement systems work best when there is buy-in, and they result in timely interventions, recognition and reward.

• Performance indicators should focus on that which is in control of the police.

• Differentiate between outcome indicators (crime stats, public perceptions) and output indicators (operations, arrests, disciplinary, hearings, etc).

• Performance indicators should only consist of the most reliable and valid measures – fewer may be better.

• Greater focus should be given to developing and monitoring indicators of police conduct.
CONCLUSIONS

• There is too much reliance on statistics – exploring other qualitative measures may be beneficial.

• Generally crime statistics are not a good measure of police performance but can be in limited categories (i.e. those related to aggravated robbery, certain sub-categories of murder).

• There should be flexibility to allow for innovation at precinct level.

• Mitigate for ‘perverse incentives’ and unintended outcomes.

• A rigorous auditing system of data collection and entry is necessary.

• Some important policing outcomes are not adequately measured (e.g. impact on organised crime, public and private sector corruption, community relations, etc).

• SAPS indicators should be developed as part of measuring the performance of the CJS as a whole.

• The SAPS should work with various external stakeholders to identify appropriate quantitative and qualitative indicators for assessing police performance.
CONTACT & SUBSCRIPTION DETAILS

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